

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SS-15 IO-13 AID-05 STR-04

COME-00 FRB-03 TRSE-00 OMB-01 XMB-02 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 EUR-12 /076 W

-----192127Z 092043 /73

P 192028Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7713

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DEPARTMENT PASS TREASURY FOR BITTNER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, EAID, EDB, VE

SUBJECT: IDB MEETING MAY 30 - BILATERALS

REF: (A) STATE 75508; (B) CARACAS 3855; (C) CARACAS 4325

(D) MILLS/BITTNER TELCON MAY 18

1. WE HAVE AGAIN RAISED MATTER OF POSSIBLE BILATERAL MEETING WITH FINMIN HURTADO THROUGH INTERMEDIARY OF HIS PERSONAL ASSISTANT, JAVIER PAZOS. ACCORDING TO PAZOS, HURTADO IS DEFINITELY INTERESTED IN MEETING SECRETARY BLUMENTHAL. WE ARE TOLD HURTADO WANTS TO USE OPPORTUNITY FOR A PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF ECONOMIC ISSUES OF INTEREST TO BOTH COUNTRIES IN LIGHT OF FORTHCOMING PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO WASHINGTON. IN ADDITION, HE EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN DISCUSSING VARIOUS TOPICS NOW PENDING BEFORE IDB AND WORLD BANK.

2. WE REALIZE ABOVE INFORMATION IS NO MORE SPECIFIC THAN THAT WHICH WE WERE ABLE TO OBTAIN EARLIER. WE BELIEVE FURTHER APPROACHES TO HURTADO ON THIS SUBJECT WOULD PRODUCE NO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, BUT COULD PROVE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. HURTADO IS A HIGHLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NATIONALISTIC, INTELLIGENT MAN WHO HAS DEMONSTRATED EXTREME SENSITIVITY TO REAL OR IMAGINED SLIGHTS IN THE PAST. HE IS ALSO AN ABLE ECONOMIST WHO ENJOYS THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PRESIDENT, AND WHOSE INFLUENCE WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT TRANSCENDS HIS PORTFOLIO AS MINISTER OF FINANCE. HE CLEARLY INFLUENCES GOV POSITIONS ON A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES OF INTEREST

TO THE USG, INCLUDING, FOR EXAMPLE, POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF PORTUGAL AND JAMAICA, AND THE CLIMATE FOR US INVESTMENT IN VENEZUELA. HE CLEARLY IS PLAYING A KEY ROLE IN PREPARING PRESIDENT PEREZ FOR HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

3. LIKE MANY THOUGHTFUL VENEZUELAN, HURTADO SEEMS INTRIGUED BY THE CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATIONS IN WASHINGTON, AND WHAT THIS MAY MEAN IN TERMS OF CHANGES IN HEMISPHERIC RELATIONSHIPS AND IN LONG HELD USG POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORA. THE PROPOSED BILATERAL WOULD PROVIDE HIM HIS FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO SIZE UP THE NEW ADMINISTRATION AND ONE OF ITS KEY DECISION MAKERS.

4. IF HURTADO WERE TO COME AWAY FROM A MEETING IMPRESSED, IT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF THE FORTHCOMING CARTER/PEREZ MEETINGS AND TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS WITH A COUNTRY IMPORTANT TO THE UNITED STATES FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS. IF ON THE OTHER HAND, WE WERE TO DENY HURTADO THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A BILATERAL MEETING AFTER THE POSSIBILITY WAS RAISED AT OUR INITIATIVE (STATE 75508), WE CAN ONLY LOSE, FOR HURTADO IS EASILY AFFRONTED AND HAS A LONG MEMORY.

5. FOR THE ABOVE REASONS WE RECOMMEND STRONGLY THAT SECRETARY BLUMENTHAL AGREE TO A BILATERAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MEETING DURIN THE IDB SESSION IN SAN SALVADOR.
VAKY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEVELOPMENT BANKS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CARACA05034
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770179-0322
Format: TEL
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770540/aaaabipj.tel
Line Count: 99
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Message ID: 72425e90-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 75508, 77 CARACAS 3855, 77 CARACAS 4325
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2458550
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IDB MEETING MAY 30 - BILATERALS
TAGS: ECON, EAID, VE, IDB, (HURTADO, HECTOR), (BLUMENTHAL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/72425e90-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009